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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995

Revised estimates under section 4

Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories

Sixth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/49/51) in which he submitted revised estimates under section 4 of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 relating to the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories. During its consideration of the report the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, including a representative of the Special Coordinator who provided additional information to the Committee.

2. Paragraphs 5 to 12 of the Secretary-General's report outline the activities that have already been undertaken as well as those envisaged for the remainder of the biennium. In view of the need for delivering assistance and the large amounts involved for disbursement, as indicated in paragraph 6 of the report, "it is foreseen that the United Nations will continue to play a major role in delivering assistance to the Palestinians during 1995"; "this underscores the role of the Special Coordinator in coordinating the international effort in the occupied territories" and "also indicates the effort required on the part of the United Nations system to ensure the delivery of international assistance to the Palestinian people".

3. Staff resources approved for the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO) by the General Assembly in resolution 48/228 B of 5 April 1994 include a post at the Under-Secretary-General level, one D-1 post, one P-5 post and one General Service post for a

total of four posts for the period up to 31 December 1995. The resolution authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount not to exceed $1,140,000 for the period from 1 April 1994 to 31 December 1995.

4. As indicated in paragraph 19 of the report, in addition to the four posts already approved by the General Assembly, a total of 29 posts comprising 3 P-4 posts, 1 P-3, 3 General Service, 4 Field Service, 4 Security Service and 14 Local level posts have been requested.

5. The costs for all 32 posts as indicated in paragraph 22 of the report would amount to $1,216,600. In addition, an amount of $221,900 would be required for staff assessment under section 28 of the programme budget to be offset by income in the same amount under income section 1. For reasons indicated in paragraph 24 of the report, it is estimated that a provision in the amount of $56,300 will be required for consultant services; a provision in the amount of $31,000 would also be required for staff training purposes.

6. Non-staff operational requirements as outlined in the annex to the report amount to $2,033,900; requirements for consultancy services and training mentioned above have been included in this amount. As indicated in paragraph 29 of the Secretary-General's report, these requirements would be met in part from redeployment in the amount of $1 million from general operating expenses from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) under section 4 of the programme budget for 1994-1995.

7. As indicated in relation to budget line items 2 to 4 in the annex, an amount of $401,000 has been estimated for the period from 1 November 1994 to 31 December 1995 for rental, upgrading, refurbishing and construction of premises; $248,000 for transportation requirements; and $604,400 for communications. Specifically with regard to transport, the Advisory Committee was informed that an amount of $8,400 for rental of vehicles would not be required since the vehicles have already been obtained from UNTSO.

8. The estimates of the resource requirements for UNSCO as indicated in paragraphs 13 to 27 of the report cover the period from 1 June 1994 to 31 December 1995; they are based on the findings of surveys of local infrastructure and logistical and security conditions.

9. Additional resources have also been made available to UNSCO. Following an inter-agency meeting it was agreed that organizations in the system would second their staff to UNSCO on a reimbursable basis and/or assign to UNSCO specialists in their respective fields. Pending General Assembly approval of core posts for the Office of the Special Coordinator, since August 1994 the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have each made available a P-3 post on a reimbursable basis to the Coordinator. In addition, UNDP has seconded a D-1 post to UNSCO on a reimbursable basis.

10. As indicated in paragraph 23 of the report, currently one Professional post and one Field Service post are being financed from voluntary contributions and it is expected that staff resources of the Office would be strengthened through the loan of posts from specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations

system; details are being worked out with the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). A number of donor countries have also expressed their willingness to finance specific posts for projects.

11. The Advisory Committee recalls that in his report of 29 March 1994 (A/C.5/48/71) the Secretary-General had proposed to finance staff requirements for this activity partially through redeployment of posts from other areas. At that time the Committee had not recommended acceptance of this proposal since the report did not contain information on the implications of the proposed redeployments; the current submission of the Secretary-General does not address the issue. The Committee requests that it be updated on progress in this regard.

12. The Advisory Committee expects that in the future a more comprehensive submission of all of the staff resources being made available to the Office of the Special Coordinator will be included in the budget document in conjunction with and showing their relationship to the staffing resources being requested. In addition, information on all of the programme resources available to the operation should be indicated in the report so that the relationship to administrative requirements can be properly assessed. Moreover, this information should be accompanied by a comprehensive account of the programme of work substantiating the administrative and budgetary implications of programme activities.

13. Pending receipt of such information as indicated in the paragraphs above, the Advisory Committee will review the requirements in their totality in the context of its examination of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. In the meantime, the Advisory Committee recommends that the additional staff requirements be funded through general temporary assistance and that, subject to the procedures for the use and operation of the contingency fund, an amount of $1,216,600 be appropriated for this purpose under section 4.C (Special missions) of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. In addition, with regard to the non-post requirements, bearing in mind its comments and observations in the paragraphs above, particularly with regard to premises and rental of vehicles and taking into account that $1 million of the requirement can be met from redeployment of resources (see para. 6 above), the Advisory Committee recommends that, subject to the procedures for the use and operation of the contingency fund, the General Assembly appropriate an amount of $1,025,500 under section 4 of the programme budget for the 1994-1995 biennium for the period from 1 June 1994 to 31 December 1995.